The Archaeologist

Player Class for Fifth Edition

The Archaeologist is an explorer and a scholar, a new player class that provides a combination of exploration skills, combat abilities, and plenty of variety and character development. There are three distinct specialties that archaeologists reflect; the insightful and magical Lore Master, the dead-raising Paleontologist, and the durable Plunderer. With unmatched abilities in the field of dungeon delving, the archaeologist is a must-have for any good crawl.

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Archaeologist

With a curved blade in hand, a gnome nimbly dodges a spear, shining in the torchlight, before it even shoots out of the corridor wall.

An aged dwarf chants the formula of an ancient spell, etched into a stone relief on an enormous altar in a vast, cyclopean hall.

A man swings over a jagged gap from a whip, which is coiled around a branch above, as he ventures on deeper into the overgrown crypt.

Archaeologists embody the spirit of dungeon crawling, with a vast array of athletic and intellectual abilities to help them survive in their dangerous line of work.

Looters and Explorers

Archaeologists are masters of dungeon exploration, and are often interested in discovering ancient and lost knowledge, as well as treasure of any sorts. They generally acquire skills on the job and through research, and every experience further builds an archaeologist's abilities.

Archaeologists are skilled at navigating dungeons, locating traps and hidden objects, and applying ancient knowledge. They are also fairly capable of protecting themselves from threats, though direct combat isn't always their strong suit. Experienced archaeologists even become skilled at using the magic they come into contact with during their expeditions.

Historic Discoveries

For many archaeologists, learning from and preserving history is just as important as plundering ancient ruins, and most regard their scholarly duties with huge importance. Archaeologists would only defile historic records and ancient architecture when the need is dire, and they are ready to fight back against creatures that would do so. They gather artifacts and study ancient ruins to learn about the past.

Not all archaeologists share the same beliefs, however. To some, treasure is far more valuable than knowledge. These looters use their skills and insight for plundering tombs and gathering riches, with regards toward historic importance of neither treasure nor dungeon.

No matter their motives, however, most archaeologists can be found on expeditions within ancient sites and exploring dungeons, where their skills and interests are best applied.

Creating an Archaeologist

The main aspect of the archaeologist's character is his or her motive. Are you an insightful scholar, seeking to expand your wisdom by discovering ancient knowledge and lore? Are you a navigator who explores simply to discover new places and is skilled at leading others? Or perhaps you are a rogue tomb robber who breaks into ancient ruins to find valuable treasure and increase your wealth? Whatever motivates you should be mirrored in your Specialty chosen at 2nd level.

Because of the wide variety of motives held by archaeologists, they tend toward no specific alignment. Good archaeologists might refrain from defiling sacred places or disturbing delicate historical records. Evil ones may have fewer cares for historic significance and destroy anything between them and their goals. Your alignment is also helpful for defining how your archaeologist plays out and what their motives are.

Quick Build

You can make an archaeologist quickly by following these suggestions. First, Intelligence should be your highest ability score, followed by Dexterity or Wisdom. Second, choose the sage background.

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Archaeologist

Level	Proficiency Bonus	Features
1st	+2	Dungeoneer
2nd	+2	Able Body, Expedition Specialty
3rd	+2	Expertise
4th	+2	Ability Score Improvement
5th	+3	Labyrinth Navigator
6th	+3	Expedition Specialty Feature
7th	+3	Extra Attack
8th	+3	Ability Score Improvement
9th	+4	Expertise
10th	+4	Ability Score Improvement
11th	+4	Expedition Specialty Feature
12th	+4	Ability Score Improvement
13th	+5	Identification
14th	+5	Historic Insight
15th	+5	Expedition Specialty Feature
16th	+5	Ability Score Improvement
17th	+6	Trap Sense
18th	+6	Expedition Specialty Feature
19th	+6	Ability Score Improvement
20th	+6	Magical Knowledge

Class Features

As an archaeologist, you have the following class features

Hit Points

Hit Dice: 1d8 per archaeologist level
Hit Points at 1st Level: 8 + your Constitution modifier
Hit Points at Higher Levels: 1d8 (or 5) + your Constitution modifier per archaeologist level after 1st

Proficiencies

Armor: Light armor, shields
Weapons: Simple weapons, rapiers, scimitars, shortswords, war picks, whips, blowguns, and hand crossbows
Tools: Cartographer's tools, thieves' tools

Saving Throws: Dexterity, Wisdom
Skills: Choose any three

Equipment

You start with the following equipment, in addition to the equipment granted by your background:

- (a) a scimitar, (b) a whip, or (c) any simple weapon
- (a) a burglar's pack or (b) a dungeoneer's pack
- (a) cartographer's tools or (b) thieves' tools
- Leather armor and a dagger

Dungeoneer

You are experienced at exploring dungeons and are accustomed to their layouts. You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) and Intelligence (Investigation) checks made to detect the presence of secret doors and traps. You can search for traps while traveling at a normal pace, instead of only at a slow pace, and you have advantage on saving throws made to avoid or resist traps. If you fail on an ability check made to disable a trap, you do not activate the trap.

Able Body

Beginning at 2nd level, you are skilled at traversing challenging terrain in dungeons. You can treat difficult terrain as normal terrain, and climbing does not halve your speed.

Additionally, you can spend one minute observing your surroundings. After doing so, you gain advantage on your next Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check made to traverse any terrain or obstacle that you observed. Once you have used this feature, you may not use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

Expedition Specialty

When you reach second level, you choose a style of archaeology and exploration: the Lore Master, Paleontologist, or Plunderer, all detailed at the end of the class description. Your specialty grants you features at 2nd level, and again at 6th, 11th, 15th, and 18th level.

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Expertise

At 3rd level, choose two of your skill proficiencies. Your proficiency bonus is doubled for any ability check you make that uses either of the chosen proficiencies. At 9th level, you can choose another two skill proficiencies to gain this benefit.

Ability Score Improvement

When you reach 4th level, and again at 8th, 10th, 12th, 16th, and 19th level, you can increase one ability score of your choice by 2, or you can increase two ability scores of your choice by 1. As normal, you can't increase an ability score above 20 using this feature.

Labyrinth Navigator

At 5th level, you are a master of dungeon navigation. You cannot get lost by nonmagical means, and you always know which direction the exit to a dungeon or other enclosure is in.

Extra Attack

Beginning at 7th level, you can attack twice, instead of once, whenever you take the Attack action on your turn.

Identification

Starting at 13th level, your knowledge of magical items is vast, and you can skillfully identify them. You can spend 10 minutes studying a magic item, at the end of which you make an Intelligence (Arcana) check. The DC of the check is based on the item's rarity. If you succeed the check, you apply the effect of an *identify* spell to the item.

Item Rarity	Arcana check DC
Common	10
Uncommon	15
Rare	18
Very rare	20
Legendary	25

For items of other rarities, such as artifacts, it is up to the DM to decide the Difficulty Class.

Historic Insight

At 14th level, you can predict the placements of hidden traps and doors based on your knowledge. When you enter a dungeon or other enclosure you can make an Intelligence (History) check, with a DC determined by the Dungeon Master based on the dungeon's historical significance in the campaign setting. On a success, you have 1d4 that you can add to any ability check made to locate a hidden object in the dungeon. You may add this bonus before or after seeing the result of your roll, but before any of its effects are applied. Once you have used this ability, you must complete a short or long rest before you may use it again.

Trap Sense

At 17th level, you have honed your senses, and you are always prepared for danger. You automatically detect the nature of all traps within 10 feet of yourself, and you are resistant to damage dealt by traps. Also, you have advantage on ability checks made to disable traps.

Magical Knowledge

Starting at 20th level, you have come into contact with magic in many forms. You learn two cantrips and two 1st-level spells. You can cast these spells at will, without requiring material components. Intelligence is your spellcasting ability for these spells.

Spell save DC = 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Intelligence modifier
Spell attack modifier = your proficiency bonus + your Intelligence modifier.

Expedition Specialties

Becoming an archaeologist requires rigorous training and a specific goal in mind. When an archaeologist decides their specialty at 2nd level, they commit themselves toward a specialized set of abilities to focus on that will allow them to achieve their goals in their expeditions.

Lore Master

Lore Masters are archaeologists with historical and intellectual focuses. They learn more about ancient texts and lore than other archaeologists, and are able to use a broader range of magic.

Text in Stone

When you choose this Specialty at 2nd level, you gain a greater knowledge of forgotten scripts. When you see writing of a language you do not know, you may ask the DM to make a secret DC 15 Intelligence (History) check. On a success, you translate the text correctly, but you translate it incorrectly on a failure, and the DM cannot tell you whether you succeeded or failed.

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Ancient Magic
At 6th level, you have acquired basic skill in spellcasting. You learn two cantrips of your choice from any spell list. You can cast these spells without requiring material components, with Intelligence as your spellcasting ability.

Arcane Reading
Beginning at 11th level, you know the common languages of magic writings. You are able to read from any magic scroll with a level that is equal to or less than half of your archaeologist level (rounded down). Intelligence is always your spellcasting ability for spells cast in this way.

Magic Speech
Starting at 15th level, your magical knowledge allows you to communicate with any creature. You can understand every language, and any creature that speaks a language can understand what you say.

Use Magic Device
By 18th level, you have learned enough about the workings of magic that you can improvise the use of items even when they are not intended for you. You ignore all class, race, and level requirements on the use of magic items.

Paleontologist
The paleontologist studies ancient history, even older than most archaeologists. They can apply their knowledge of archaic creatures to both ancient remains and modern descendants.

Cladistics
When you choose this specialty at 2nd level, you have a greater knowledge of ancient evolution. You can determine information about any beast you encounter by making an Intelligence (Nature) check as an action. The DC is 15 + the beast's Challenge Rating (round down). On a success, the DM tells you one fact of your choice:

- One of the beast's ability scores
- The beast's armor class or speed
- The beast's skill or saving throw proficiencies
- The beast's resistances or immunities

Old Bones
At 6th level, you know how to reassemble the skeletons of long-dead creatures. When you find a skeleton, you may perform a 10 minute ritual that returns it to life. You must be able to touch the skeleton throughout the ritual. At the end of the ritual, the skeleton comes to life under your control. It retains all of its normal stats with the following modifications:

- Type becomes *undead*
- Alignment matches your alignment
- It is vulnerable to bludgeoning damage
- It is immune to poison damage and the poisoned condition
- It has darkvision out to a range of 60 feet
- The skeleton does not require food, water, air, or sleep

Each skeletal minion you create lasts until it is reduced to 0 hit points or until you release it as an action, at which point it becomes a pile of bones once again. You may have a number of skeletons under your control up to your Intelligence modifier.

As an action, you may command your skeletons. You may issue any one of these commands to your group, or issue a different command to each individual skeleton.

Fight. The skeleton(s) follows you and attacks the nearest creatures it can see.

Guard. The skeleton(s) stands between you and the nearest hostile creature it can see.

Formation. The skeletons stand in a specific tactical formation you determine (for example, stacking upon each other to form a stairway or spanning a gap to form a bridge).

Dismiss. The skeleton(s) follows after you, and does not attack creatures.

Hide. The skeleton(s) takes the Hide action by pretending to be a normal pile of bones. While like this, the skeleton is prone.

Move. The skeleton(s) moves to a specified point. It can also pick up a specified object when the command is issued.

Deathless
Beginning at 11th level, the ancient magic you have encountered seeps into your body. When you are reduced to 0 hit points but not killed outright, you can drop to 1 hit point instead. You can't use this feature again until you finish a long rest.

Additionally, as an action on your turn, you may regain a number of hit points equal to 1d 10 + your Constitution modifier. Once you use this feature, you must finish a short or long rest before you can use it again.

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Command the Horde
Starting at 15th level, you can command your skeletal minions as a bonus action and as an action. Also, your minions have advantage on attack rolls made while standing within 5 feet of another of your skeletons.

Dead Legion
Beginning at 18th level, you can create overwhelming numbers of skeletal minions. You add your archaeologist level to the maximum number of minions you can create, in addition to your Intelligence modifier.

Plunderer
The plunderer is a skilled explorer and an expert looter. They are treasure hunters and scavengers who use their expert abilities to find treasure and riches.

Treasure Hunter
When you choose this specialty at 2nd level, you are more skilled at locating treasure. You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks made to locate loot, treasure, and hidden objects

Fighting and Finesse
Beginning at 6th level, you have acquired greater skill with your weapons. You consider whips to be light weapons, and you can use hand crossbows in two-weapon fighting as if they were melee weapons.

Additionally, you can swing on whips and other ropes when maneuvering through dungeons. When you make a long jump or high jump, you may lash a whip or rope around an object above you. If there is such an object, then you may double the distance that you can jump, and you do not need a running start.

Self Defense
Starting at 11th level, you have acquired additional skills in combat. You are proficient with unarmed strikes, which deal 1d4 + your Strength modifier in bludgeoning damage, and are considered light weapons. Also, when fighting with a whip or improvised whip, you may make a Grapple contest with a target that you hit with an attack. On a success, you disarm the target, and on a failure, it has no effect.

Additionally, when an attacker that you can see hits you with an attack, you can use your reaction to halve the attack's damage against you.

Detect Curse
At 15th level, you can immediately tell whether an item is cursed. You can sense the presence of all cursed items within 10 feet of yourself when you are not incapacitated, and the nature of the curse they bear.

Elusive
Beginning at 18th level, you are so evasive that attackers rarely gain the upper hand against you. No attack roll has advantage against you while you aren't incapacitated.

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